

COMET NEWS

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A Few Words from Student Government President, Alina Nodrat

By Sabrina Bishnu-Klat

Recently, I sat down with our Student Government President, Alina Nodrat. To recap, here are a few things she had to say about being elected president and what she plans to do during her term.

Q. What are some of your goals?

A: My main goal is to promote inclusivity, bridge the gap between the administration and students, and hold more spirit events. Due to COVID-19, our lives have been altered in ways we can't even describe.

The one thing we can do, as a community, is to connect with one another no matter who we are. By having events, specifically spirit events, we are able to bring our students, faculty, and administration together in ways we haven't seen before. Whether it is charity events or Battle of the Classes, there will be something for everyone to participate in.

Another goal I would like to mention is to create a safe space for all of our students. I hold the position of president with great honor knowing that I represent our students and am someone they can reach out to about anything. I hope that by knowing what our students want to see at Hicksville High School, we can put together our efforts and create unstoppable change.

Q. What was your reaction to being elected?

A. In all honesty it was pure shock. I was in self-defense about to flip over my friend Andrea



Photo: Student Government President, Alina Nodrat

and Mr. Harris walked in. He asked Mr. Schweizer if I could be excused from class for a little and he said yes. I followed him and was greeted by Ms. Temps. We first talked about the campaign and then they told me I had won! I couldn't stop laughing and smiling. I ran back to class and waited to hear the announcement, just so I knew it was true. When I heard Mr. Harris on the PA system, I quickly picked up my phone and started to record so I could get my reaction on video. He announced, "President," followed by my name and I yelled. I was so excited. I don't think I stopped smiling for like an hour after that. Of course, I also had to text my family and best friends about it.

Q. Is there anything you would like to add?

A. Make sure you join HHS's Student Government! Our meetings are every other Wednesday. Join our classroom with this code: 5uxd6ch.

The Pandemic and School Anxiety

By Alison Fernandez Rodriguez

Everyone reacts to change differently and during the first months of COVID, everyone's lives changed drastically leaving teenagers and adults to get used to a virtual world.

Each of us got used to it in our own way, but when it was time for another change, some of us took it hard.

As we navigate the natural vulnerabilities of this stage in our lives as adolescents, we also are navigating a pandemic which has added additional worry and isolation. Coming back to school has brought a sense of normalcy, but also that stress and concern still exists. Throughout this school year, there have been events that have occurred which have caused students to feel unsafe, unhappy, or worried.

As students, our minds are still developing; our mental, emotional state of mind can make it difficult to deal with stressful issues. Not only does the stress come from important tasks like school work and having friends, but also with feeling safe at school.

Recently there has been tension within schools, even here at Hicksville. Whether it's from social media postings or student-to-student conflict in the building, these events cause emotional and psychological impact on teachers, staff and students.

Many schools and students on Long Island and across the United States have been dealing with these events. Luckily, to help our students and community feel safer, our school administrators have been in contact with the community in regards to social media postings.

Many schools are trying their best to assist students with developing positive behaviors and also give them consequences to their mistakes because everyone is entitled to an education and every student should feel safe throughout the school year.

When asked if she felt safe coming to school, Malak Shehata, a junior, said, "Yes, I do because we have a lot of outlets to ask for help but the idea of my parents knowing what I'm going through is what scares me."

Malak also expressed her thoughts about school stress, "[It] can be very overwhelming and I know some teachers do understand and some others they just say they understand, but they continue to pile up on our school work and it's overwhelming."

To cope with the stress teens often to turn to drugs and alcohol, and it can get to the point where it has destructive consequences.

Getting help can be hard because at our age everyone wants independence. It's a rush of emotions from feeling lonely, confused or left out and these emotions cause young people to act differently, dropping classes, skipping class, lashing out on teachers and parents. This is the step where teens need the most help from adults and even help from friends.

If you find yourself struggling with stress and anxiety, reach out for help in a healthy way; talk to a counselor, social worker or a trusted adult. Together we can find our way through these challenging times.

7 Ways to Deal With Stress

By Mallika Rangi

As the school year progresses students may be experiencing more stress than usual. Although stress is a common part of life, it is important to learn how to cope with it so people can function in a healthy manner in everyday life.

Here are some tips on how to deal with stress:

1. Get more sleep!

Sleep has been proven to both improve mood and enhance brain function, since a constant sleep routine calms and restores the body.

In addition, sleep is a necessity in order to perform well in school, as it sharpens decision and judgment-making skills, as well as problem-solving. According to doctors, teenagers should receive between 8-10 hours of sleep each night.



2. Exercise

Exercising has both physical and mental health



benefits, and it is certainly a means of stress relief. Exercising allows one to release energy and helps

to distract people from their troubles while increasing dopamine and endorphin levels.

Exercise so that you can be in a better mood and effectively handle stress!

3. Hang out with friends and family

Remaining social is an excellent way to deal with stress and have fun with others. Socializing has been proven to increase hormone levels that decrease anxiety, as well as help people gain confidence in themselves. Through spending time with your friends and family, you can relax and have fun with those you love the most.



4. Journal

Journaling is a great way to get rid of negative thoughts

or feelings and can provide an emotional release. Journaling helps people solve problems efficiently and is a beneficial way one can reduce stress and improve mental health.

5. Meditate

One of the easiest methods of stress relief includes mindfulness meditation



which involves being aware and focusing on a

7 Ways to Deal With Stress (continued)

certain activity or thought in the present moment. This is something that can be learned quickly, and can be done any time negative emotions are present. By closing your eyes and taking deep breaths, you can help yourself become emotionally calm and clear your mind.

6. Improve your time management skills

One of the major causes of stress is poor time



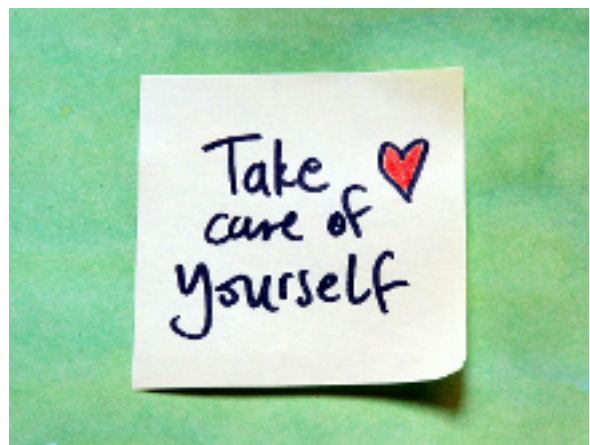
management. One way to improve your time management skills is to create schedules and start your tasks early. Tracking your tasks and keeping a to-do list would also help keep things organized, and would give you encouragement to complete your activities on a timely basis. Time management reduces stress because it provides one with a clear path when they have a lot of work to complete. Create a schedule so that you can remain productive!

7. Make yourself a priority!

While it is easy to feel overwhelmed by numerous responsibilities, it is important to remember that nothing is more important than maintaining your mental health and taking care of yourself. Don't feel afraid to ask

your teachers for an extension on an assignment or communicate with your friends and family about how you are feeling. If you need to, take a day off from schoolwork to de-stress. Take a nice bubble bath, listen to your favorite music and watch your favorite movies. Maintaining positive mental health is crucial so don't feel like you need to sacrifice your health in order to meet deadlines.

While stress is something that most people have to deal with, there are tips that can help relieve stress or manage stress. If you haven't already, try the tips listed above! There may be other techniques that can work just for you, and you may need to experiment to find something that works best. Although stress negatively affects many people, there are ways to overcome it, and you can feel your best even when things may seem difficult.



The Status of Inflation

By Daniel Gregov

In the aftermath of the Coronavirus and global shutdowns of factories and jobs, there has been an increase in the prices of everyday household items that average consumers use.

U.S. inflation hit a three-decade high in October, delivering widespread and sizable price increases to households for everything from groceries to cars due to persistent supply shortages and strong consumer demand.

The U.S. government has been trying to lessen the impact of shutdowns for the past year and a half by paying workers unemployment benefits and making bond buying programs. Now they have started to taper these programs. However, the inflation is not transitory anymore, but here to stay for a while.

According to Bloomberg news and The Labor Department, the consumer-price index, which measures what consumers pay for goods and services, increased in October by 6.2% from a year ago. That was the fastest 12-month pace since 1990 and the fifth straight month of inflation above 5%.

Prices are also increasing more in some parts of the country than in others. According to the Wall Street Journal' in their article "Where Inflation Is Highest in the U.S.", consumer prices were up 7.3% last month in the region that encompasses Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota. Mid-Atlantic states, however, saw prices rise less, by 5.4% from a year ago.

Mid-Westerners saw relatively higher housing costs in October, with rent, natural gas and home furnishings all rising at a higher rate than in other regions.

Rental prices in Northeastern states, by

contrast, grew at a much slower pace than elsewhere last month.

Then, there is the problem of a chip shortage that impacts any products with technology. Examples include computers, phones, and cars. Since there is a low amount of circuit chips and an increased demand for computers, tablets, etc, the prices of these products are also going higher than usual. This is a sign of inflation. Almost a year into a global chip shortage, the problems are increasing for many customers as delays get even longer and sales are lost.

In another article written by the WSJ entitled "Global Chip Shortage 'Is Far From Over' as Wait Times Get Longer", Manuel Schoenfeld placed an order in May for transmission chips for the utility-monitoring devices made by his New York-based company PowerX. He was told the chips would arrive by summer, then fall, then winter and now doesn't expect to get them until May 2022. This can affect his customers and his quarterly revenue for his company. The longer the wait time the longer the consumer has to wait to get the product and the longer the wait for money the company gets in profits.

In conclusion, the Coronavirus-related shutdowns in March of 2020 have impacted the American economy and consumer industry in a huge way that hasn't been seen in decades. It impacts small businesses and small consumers the most. Even though it is a global inflation problem, it impacts Americans' position as the world's top economic superpower since the economy is being threatened by rising prices and longer wait times for products to produce revenue.

BOCES Programs Bring Specialty Classes to Hicksville Students

By Roxy Dias

Many Hicksville High School students are part of the BOCES program, dedicating a substantial part of their day towards specific BOCES classes that will help them pursue certain trades in the future. Two of our students were interviewed about their experience so far in these programs.

Police Science/Criminal Justice

Juletsy, who began taking Police Science/Criminal Justice last year, leaves for BOCES for three periods every day. She is a senior who aspires to become a detective.

In her class, she has learned several things from this course including the way you should communicate with an emotionally disturbed person, the correct way to arrest someone, the correct way on how to do a traffic stop. In addition, she learned how to lift fingerprints off an item, identifying the tools that were used for a robbery, and what it takes to be a police officer.

When she graduates BOCES, she will be certified in being a security guard and certified in CPR.



Medical Assistant

Alison, another student at Hicksville High School, is taking the BOCES class to become a

medical assistant. She started this course this year in September. In her course, she learns how to sterilize instruments, prevent disease, communicate with people while staying calm and in control with facial expressions and words. In addition, she learns how to act fast with a positive attitude in the face of pandemonium. This year is mainly textbook work, as they have to absorb as much knowledge as we can for next year. During BOCES next year, she will go to the hospital and shadow the staff.

Alison loves the program, and thinks that it is worth it for those trying to pursue a career in nursing. She commented that she has a nice, patient teacher who makes the class more fun.

Because Alison's mother was a nurse in her country, Alison's childhood included a substantial amount of time in the hospital. It was there that she "fell in love with the medical field." Thus, she is very grateful for all the professional help she is receiving with the BOCES program, taking her dream and making it a reality.



BOCES Programs Bring Specialty Classes to Hicksville Students

By Zohra Uddeen & Sadaf Farid

Throughout Hicksville High School, there may be a lot of opportunities you may not have known about! This could include the BOCES nursing assisting program, which allows high school students like you to become certified nursing assistants within only two years.

Responsibilities of Nursing Assistants

Nursing assistants help patients with daily activities such as bathing and eating.

Students get to learn and experience the responsibilities of nurses in the medical field. After learning the basics they go to clinics and shadow nurses working with patients.

The first 4 periods of the day are dedicated to the nursing program and remaining periods include electives classes and other required core subjects. The program allows young adults to make a living right after high school.

Genesis Mojica, a year-one nursing student, is currently learning the basics such as the proper way to wash hands and moving a patient from a bed to a wheelchair.

This gets students interested in an early career education, "I'm very dedicated and I'm actually motivated to do what I want and love. I was someone who didn't really put much interest in school though with BOCES I feel very on task and on top of myself" said Mojica.

The nursing program has had a positive impact on Genesis allowing her to pursue her dream early. "I'm very excited to be a nursing assistant. I'm loving everything we do in it and I'm just happy that I'm able to be in the class".



Interested in enrolling in the nursing program?

It's as easy as speaking with your guidance counselor about the program. Your counselor will have to see if you qualify for it. Each year of BOCES gives you four credits and every program lasts for two years in order to become certified. Nassau BOCES carries many different types of programs available for all students.



Alumni Spotlight

By Katelyn Corbett

When years follow behind the graduating students of the coronavirus pandemic, Hicksville High is left in question of how things turned out for their former students after graduating, what path they took and if they're succeeding at life? Both the class of 2020 and 2021 were impacted by this pandemic, most importantly last year's class, 2021. Their senior year slipped away at their fingertips and they were left to virtual classes.

One alum of the class of 2021, Lauren Chapin was kind enough to let me interview her and ask her all of the questions Hicksville High has been wondering.

Lauren is a great example of a student who made most of her senior year and graduated in June of 2021 after struggling with her balance of being an online student along with having a busy life.

Throughout high school, Lauren shared she was not involved in as many extracurriculars as she would like to because she was a part of the Hicksville Starlets. She was always busy at kickline practice; with that she competed and danced for our homecoming and football games, along with long kickline practices she was very involved as a competitive dancer for The Dance Place. Balancing school, dance, and kickline took a lot out of her schedule, but it all worked out for her in the end.

Lauren is currently enrolled in Nassau Community College majoring in early childhood education, but is in the process of changing paths to become either a social worker or therapist. An important part of her high school career is wishing she put more effort into her grades instead of focusing so much on dance. She also wished her graduating class was more creative with what they could've done as seniors. With covid they were very limited especially in the beginning of the year, but she strongly believes they all could've made more out of it if everyone were to have argued less.

After graduation, she was on to bigger things which brought a whole wave of new thoughts and feelings into her mind. She explained how it's definitely a scarier feeling once you're on your own with school. In high school, teachers are very on top of you and your work, but in college you have to do it because no one is gonna chase you to get the work done. Lauren likened it to a slap in the face telling you that you need to start getting your stuff together and that this is the time to claim your own independence.

While high school was hybrid for Lauren in a pandemic, her first semester of college in a pandemic was all online which was majorly confusing cause it was all new. She is soon going to transition into going in person and she has plans to transfer to a different school.

Lauren has come a long way, with my personal connection to her I can speak for her and say she made a good path for herself, she has a strong head on her shoulders and I'm excited to see what else she accomplishes and how far she will go.



New Teacher Spotlight

By Sabrina Bishnu-Klat and Stephanie Dolan

Hicksville High School has many new faces among the faculty this year. We interviewed some of them and here is what we found learned.

Mr. Stephan

What subject are you teaching? Social Studies, Global History and Economics

What made you want to become a teacher? I had a very good group of social studies teachers in high school. I think my AP US History course put the idea of being a teacher in the back of my mind. When I went to college, I majored in economics and math, but I took a number of history courses as electives. Eventually, I had an "ah ha!" moment and I decided to go to graduate school for teaching.

Favorite thing about teaching? My favorite thing about teaching is the students. Every student has their own unique personality and they express it in different ways. That makes every day interesting. I never know what to expect when I come in to school.

What are your hobbies outside of school? I am an avid runner and a big Islander fan.

Any fun facts/interests of yours you'd like to share? My favorite meal is breakfast. Coffee is a necessity. I really enjoy traveling. I studied abroad in New Zealand for a semester in college and I highly recommend that to anyone who has the chance to do the same.

Ms. Todd

What subject do you teach ? 10th Grade English

What made you want to become a teacher? In fourth grade, I had an amazing teacher. She was tough, but loving, and her passion for teaching inspired me to become a teacher. More specifically, I chose English in particular due to my high school AP



English teacher. She, too, was a passionate teacher with a strong love for both literature and her students. Everyday I left that class having learned a new life lesson. She was much like Morrie Schwartz in that sense. I knew that I wanted to be THAT teacher to make a difference in students' lives, much like these teachers did for me.

Favorite thing about teaching?

There are lots of things I love about teaching, but my favorite thing is working with students. From the first day students enter my classroom, we become a family. It is a give-and-take relationship, and we learn from each other. There are so many jobs in this

world that are rewarding, but none are comparable to teaching. Seeing the growth in my students, socially, emotionally, and academically, is the best gift any teacher can receive.

What are your hobbies outside of school? Aside from eating all the time, I love being active. I enjoy bike riding, hiking, and snowboarding. I am also really big on traveling!

Any fun facts/interests of yours you'd like to share? I put hot sauce on just about anything you can imagine; I even make my own from peppers I grow in the summer. I am a big Rangers fan!

Ms. Minot

What subject are you teaching? Global 10 + electives and International Law & Lessons for Life

What grade(s) are you teaching? I have students from grades 9-12 throughout all of my classes.

What made you want to become a teacher?

My grandmother was a teacher and we always used to play school. That put the idea in my head, but then in high school I worked at an education center and camps, which showed me that education was what I was drawn to as a career..

What are your hobbies outside of school?

Hanging out with my dog or my nieces, Mets games, concerts and baking.

Celebrating the Holidays in a Pandemic

By Gia Rangi

In these difficult and unfortunate times, it may be harder to spend the holidays with friends or family, and keep traditions from previous years going. However, in Hicksville High School, many students have been able to continue traditions and celebrate in a safe and fun way.

Jenitta Thomas celebrated Thanksgiving by having the oldest person in the room cut the turkey, playing fun family games, and having the youngest kids sing a song for the crowd. This Christmas time was made special for Jenitta since it was her first time seeing the Rockefeller Christmas tree! She ended the night by playing music, followed by a praying ceremony. On New Year's, Jenitta celebrates her brother's birthday and watches the Times Square Ball Drop!

Manha Sheikh has traditions which include having a karaoke party where each member of the family gets a chance to sing a song, as well as give out Thanksgiving gifts in a manner similar to Secret Santa. For New Year's, Manha had to unfortunately limit the party size due to COVID-19, but was still able to gather a few cousins and watch the Time Square Ball Drop. This holiday was made special because she was able to get more in touch with her family and bond over the current situation.

Miguel Ortiz was able to escape the constraints of quarantine from the previous year by going out of state to Pennsylvania in the mountains. This was the first time Miguel and his family went out of state for Thanksgiving in order to get a release and change from the stressful times! Around Christmas and New Year's, Miguel was able to make the best of the COVID-19 situation and spend the holidays at home with his family. Being stuck indoors, Miguel was able to get the realization that "you don't need to go out to have fun...", and to also cherish what you have.

Another student, named Nailah Lalji, has fun traditions for Thanksgiving. Nailah and her family start off by writing what they're thankful for on a piece of paper without signing their names in an effort to keep it anonymous. During Christmas break, Nailah traveled to Iraq and spent New Year's in Turkey by watching fireworks and going shopping!



Kevin Dinh's holiday was made special by his aunts and uncles contributing to make their own speciality dish. He was able to bond with his family and play board games while stuck at home.

Aditya Chakraborty celebrated a simple Christmas and New Year's by going to Pennsylvania to see family.

He also had fun with his friends by playing games and hanging out at the mall! This holiday was made special for Aditya since he was able to take a break from school and focus on himself.

Hannah Lee took a trip to Virginia throughout the holidays and took many appreciative nature walks with her younger cousins. For New Year's, Hannah went back to New York and celebrated a traditional Korean New Year's. She ate traditional food and had fun bonding time with her grandparents.

Lastly we have Saivamsi Nanugonda who gets into the true spirit of Thanksgiving by making an effort to visit, and thank people each year. This year, Saivamsi and his family visited some people that were nearby, gave them gifts, and proceeded to go on a family trip for the holidays.

However you spent your holiday, we hope it was filled with some peace and joy to carry you through the new year.

Taylor Swift's All Too Well: 10 Minutes of Bittersweet Remembrance

By Danna Taboada

She had her arm wrapped around his shoulder as she smiled into the breezy, autumn sky. A shopping bag in one hand and his other placed on hers as they strolled down the street with cameras directed right in front of their faces. Yet none of that seemed to bother them as they enjoyed another casual and simplistic date. Little did they know that, eleven long years later, she would release the full ten-minute version of the song she wrote about their story as one; her self-discovery and his downfall.

As most are already aware, Taylor Swift began re-releasing her past songs with the addition of "Taylor's Version" after it was revealed that Scooter Braun, the owner of her old record label, *Big Machine Records*, was still the owner of all of her songs from her first six albums even after she parted ways. Therefore, any money made off those songs would go straight to him instead of the actual person with the talent to create such a masterpiece, Ms. Swift. Beginning with *Fearless (Taylor's Version)* in April of 2021, Taylor began to re-record and re-release her music so that her fans could continue to enjoy it and she could finally earn the money she deserved.

After announcing the re-release of her hit album *Red (2012)* back in June 2021, the wait had finally come to an end this November for everyone, fan or not.

Fans were able to relive the nostalgia and the classics they once heard as children as well as nine never before heard songs from Swift. However, despite all of this, one song, in particular, seemed to get the most attention out of all 30 songs included.

In an interview for her promotion of *Red* back in 2012, a young Taylor revealed that one song was too long to fit into her album and she eventually cut it down to five minutes. Fast forward to today, Taylor was finally able to release the full, ten-minute long version of her song "All Too Well (10 Minute Version) (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)" accompanied by a short film starring Sadie Sink as the young Miss Swift and Dylan O'Brien as the young Jake Gyllenhaal, Taylor's former lover. As usual, the singer incorporated her personal and meaningful stories and transformed them into detailed and beautiful songs, making all her fans shed tears over their imaginary former lovers. The song reminiscences of those delighted memories of a failed romance that are

embedded into the narrator's mind like a tattoo. With lines that touch the lowest point of one's heart (You kept me as a secret, but I kept you like an oath), everyone worldwide just had to take a listen to what really happened between the long-gone couple.

Fans have taken to social media to torment the actor, whether it was jokingly or not. With the power of decoding, it was noted that Mr. Gyllenhaal did in fact miss Taylor Swift's 21st birthday, not only breaking her heart but her father's, who watched her daughter patiently wait for his arrival, as well.

Fans bombarded his social media posts, restating the song's lyrics and most importantly, asking for that red scarf back (And I left my scarf there at your sister's house). Swift disses this man with one of her iconic lines to date: *I was never good at telling jokes, but the punchline goes, 'I'll get older, but your lovers stay my age.'* which happens to be absolutely correct with Jake's current girlfriend being 25 years old. She's taking all her shots and having a blast while doing it.

Back then, Taylor Swift performed the original, five-minute version of *All Too Well* at the 56th annual Grammy's in 2014. And it was clear she was still hurting from the guy who suddenly decided to end their relationship when she was still all in. Who can blame her? Wouldn't you be hurt as well? And although the pain is deep, it's never permanent. Just a couple of weeks ago, Miss Swift appeared on another episode of *Saturday Night Live* as a musical guest to perform the ten-minute version of *All Too Well*. But things were different. She still poured her heart into her performance as well as every bit of her soul as she strummed her guitar and sang to the crowd. But she was alright. She was smiling. She had healed from the drought. And like in her song, *Clean* from her 2014 album, *1989* (one of my personal favorites), "gone was any trace of" him, she was now "finally clean." Those memories would still be embedded in her mind and probably always will be. But she was no longer crying over what could've been and instead focusing on what's next, her loved ones, and herself.

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Book Nook

Interested in reading and need recommendations for a new title?
Check out these exciting novels.

By Stephanie Dolan***Anna Dressed In Blood***

by Kendare Blake



If you like reading about horror you might like “Anna Dressed In Blood” by Kendare Blake. It is a story about a Cas Lowood who doesn't work at an office but instead he hunts ghosts. He now follows in his father's footsteps hunting down the paranormal and putting an end to there rain of terror.

The Heroes of Olympus: The Lost Hero

by Rick Riordan



If you enjoy mythology such as Greek and Roman then you would “The Heroes of Olympus: The Lost Hero” by Rich Riordan. It is a continuation of the “Percy Jackson Series” and incorporates new characters. It is about a kid who doesn't know who he is and only has his friends to guide him. But they only have 4 days to save the world. Will they succeed and save the world or cause its destruction.

Comet News would like to thank the following people for their support in helping us spread the news.

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